

Candidate levels assault charge

By Jeanne Wright
The Register

NEWPORT BEACH — Randy Toler, a candidate for Congress and anti-nuclear activist, has filed a police complaint alleging that a Newport Beach man assaulted him and threatened to kill him last summer because of Toler's political activities.

Toler, chairman of the International Green Party, an anti-establishment environmentalist group, told police that Chuck Boswell, a 53-year-old Newport Beach private investigator who helped organize the city's Neighborhood Watch program, assaulted him in front of Toler's residence on June 20.

"We take every crime that is reported seriously," said Newport Beach police Lt. Mike Blitch on Tuesday. But he said Toler's complaint "obviously will not be a high priority item."

"It (the alleged incident) is old," Blitch said. "It does not appear to be a major crime (and) the victim must have placed minor importance to it if he waited over five months to report it."

No arrest has been made.

Boswell denied Toler's allegations. But he said he and Toler did get into an argument while a police officer began ticketing Toler's car and a friend of Toler's began taking Boswell's photograph.

"I told him, 'Stop taking pictures of me or I'll shove that camera down your throats and I'll jerk your heads off,'" Boswell said Tuesday. Boswell said he never got closer than 10 feet to Toler and his friend and "never touched him (Toler)."

Toler, 27, is challenging Rep. William Dannemeyer,

R-Fullerton, for the 39th District congressional seat. Toler said Tuesday that Boswell threatened, "I'm going to kill you."

"The officer didn't do anything," Toler said. "He looked the other way. It looked like I was being set up to be provoked into a fight and be arrested."

At the time, the headquarters of Toler's Green Party was his rented home at 113 29th St.

Boswell, who lives at 107 29th St., "felt we were terrorists," Toler said.

While denying he harmed or threatened Toler, Boswell said, "I don't like (him)."

Toler said he decided to report the incident to police after receiving threatening phone calls in recent weeks. Toler said he thinks the phone calls may be related to the incident with Boswell.

The political activist's name is not new to Newport Beach police.

Last year, Toler unsuccessfully sued Newport Beach Police Chief Charles Gross, claiming that the police department hurt his political group's fund-raising efforts. The case was dismissed in Small Claims Court when Toler failed to attend the hearing.

The suit, seeking \$700 from Gross, stemmed from a May 21 political meeting at Toler's Newport Beach home. Toler had advertized it as a "party" where free beer and wine would be served. Police said that as a matter of routine duty, they kept an eye on the party.

But Toler alleged that the police parked in front of his house and warned Toler's visitors to keep the noise down. Toler said that was police "harassment and a form of political repression."

No one was arrested at the party, police said.